

As editor of DSL Prime, the industry newsletter, I've written often about the provision of advanced services to all Americans. The information in FCC reports has been invaluable, often more accurate and comprehensive than industry publications selling for thousands of dollars. I do, however, seek additional information that I think is essential to forming public policy.

First, I believe the FCC or the states individually should determine which specific areas are not being served, and the incumbent's schedule for offering service there. This will enable districts without service to work locally to ensure it. In Texas and Scotland, communities have persuaded the incumbent to provide service by stimulating demand; elsewhere, competitive providers have jumped in. The incumbents cannot morally refuse to provide this information to the FCC, because it is essentially for forming policy. Publishing availability by central office and remote terminal (the form needed for action) is an unintrusive step, clearly within the FCC mission, that could make an enormous difference in universal service.

Second, the FCC reporting should include pricing information. Empirically, more Americans are excluded from advanced services by cost than by ethnicity or other factors of "digital divide." The single most effective step to bridge these gaps is to reduce prices. They should be compared internationally. As I write in September 2001, Korea h